



SEAPORT

NORTH CENTRAL IDAHO: CLEARWATER, IDAHO, LATAH, LEWIS, & NEZ PERCE COUNTIES

LABOR FORCE & EMPLOYMENT

As shown in Seaport Table 1, the Seaport's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased in April to 4.8 percent from the March rate of 4.1 percent. In April 2000, the rate was 3.8 percent. Total employment in April 2001 increased by 100 persons from the previous month but decreased by 800 persons from April 2000. So far, the year 2001 has not produced jobs at the same rate (percentage change) as the previous years of 2000, 1999 or 1998. Total employment in the area for 2001 has remained flat with little growth.

In April, the Seaport's *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased by 250 jobs from March 2001, but decreased 670 from April 2000. The increase from March 2001 was because of a small increase in *Retail Trade*. New jobs were created in *Trade* in both the wholesale and retail sectors. Two small specialty stores opened in Lewiston in May, but most of the new jobs came from existing businesses hiring a few here and there. As compared to last year, significant losses occurred in *Social Services*, *Business Services* and *Non Profit Organizations*.

SPECIAL TOPICS:

Salmon

Hundreds of anglers poured into North Central Idaho in May to experience the biggest salmon run in Idaho in more than 20 years. The anglers are pulling fish from the water and pumping millions of dollars into the economies of towns up and down the Clearwater and Salmon rivers. Business owners from Orofino to Riggins who operate tackle shops, guide and outfitter's services, gas stations, convenience stores, cafes, bars, and motels say fishing has buoyed business in the midst of a choppy economy. Usually there is a lull between the steelhead and rafting seasons. This year the salmon fishing has filled that lull nicely.

Seaport Table 1: Labor Force & Employment
Nez Perce County, Idaho, and Asotin County, Washington

	Apr 2001*	Mar 2001	Apr 2000	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	34,460	34,130	34,950	1.0	-1.4
Unemployment	1,640	1,410	1,330	16.3	23.3
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.8%	4.1%	3.8%		
Total Employment	32,820	32,720	33,620	0.3	-2.4
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	34,650	34,730	34,970	-0.2	-0.9
Unemployment	1,640	1,730	1,330	-5.2	23.3
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.7%	5.0%	3.8%		
Total Employment	33,010	33,000	33,640	0.0	-1.9
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**	25,740	25,490	26,410	1.0	-2.5
Goods-Producing Industries	5,110	5,120	5,430	-0.2	-5.9
Mining & Construction	1,320	1,320	1,370	0.0	-3.6
Manufacturing	3,790	3,800	4,060	-0.3	-6.7
Food Processing	70	70	110	0.0	-36.4
Lumber & Wood Products	710	710	730	0.0	-2.7
Paper Products	1,700	1,700	1,840	0.0	-7.6
All Other Manufacturing	1,310	1,320	1,380	-0.8	-5.1
Service-Producing Industries	20,630	20,370	20,980	1.3	-1.7
Transportation	1,350	1,350	1,340	0.0	0.7
Communications & Utilities	280	290	300	-3.4	-6.7
Wholesale Trade	940	930	970	1.1	-3.1
Retail Trade	5,370	5,140	5,230	4.5	2.7
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	1,380	1,410	1,440	-2.1	-4.2
Services	6,840	6,850	7,300	-0.1	-6.3
Government Administration	1,910	1,880	1,830	1.6	4.4
Government Education	2,560	2,520	2,570	1.6	-0.4
*Preliminary Estimate					
**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month					

Most anglers don't really want to add up how much it costs to land the big one, but a good sport from Idaho Falls agreed to estimate what he's spent on his fishing trip to Riggins. Hooking eight before reeling in his first below the Salmon Rapids Lodge:

"Well, the first thing we did was fill up the Suburban in Boise. That cost \$70." The brand new rod and reel put him back \$270. "My wife doesn't know what I spent on it," he chuckles. The fishing net was \$50, but turned out to be well worth it. A room at the lodge runs around \$80 a night, the cost of which he is splitting with a fishing buddy. Food for a day runs between \$30 and \$50. "We'll probably drop \$20 apiece tonight on dinner." The guide they hired for the next day cost \$300. But he didn't have to buy any tackle, and he didn't buy any fancy new fishing outfits for his vacation. "No new clothes," he says with a smile. "I'm already pushing my luck." Then there are the men and women who fish in the middle of the river. Boats in every price range are bobbing

on the water. Some guys are rowing \$500 dinghies. Others are sitting in \$40,000 jet boats fully loaded with all the latest gadgets.

(Editor's note: the fish weighed around 12 pounds, but created a ton of excitement on the shore.)

Agriculture

This year north central Idaho farmers intend to increase seeding of spring wheat by 8 percent, according to the Idaho Agricultural Statistics Service. However, winter wheat seeding decreased 3 percent from the 2000 crop. Barley seeding is expected to increase 2 percent. Oat seeding is expected to be unchanged. All hay intended for harvest is up one percent from last year. Nationally, spring wheat seeding is up 2 percent from last year. Winter Wheat is down 5 percent from 2000. This is the lowest acreage seeded to winter wheat since 1971. Barley seeding is 9 percent below last year.

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

Clearwater County

- When the lumber market started to decline 18 months ago, Konkolville Lumber Company in Orofino, after suffering heavy financial losses, had two choices: give in to depressed lumber prices and close down, or push forward and look for more ways to become competitive. The Konkol family that owns the mill ruled out closing the mill. Instead they decided to look at investing millions in updating equipment and diversifying. The company wants to start processing logs 4 inches or less in diameter and build a wood-fired boiler to generate electricity. To help finance the consulting and planning phase of the process, the family has turned to a federal grant program. The program allows companies that have been adversely affected by the North American Free Trade Agreement to apply for grants to help them become more competitive and efficient.

Idaho & Lewis Counties

- A new gift store in Kamiah is using huckleberries as their theme. The Huckleberry Basket near Kamiah is filled with an assortment of goodies for shoppers in search of gift items, local arts and crafts, and home-made deli food. A variety of huckleberry products, from jam to soap, can be found at the store bearing the popular berry's name.
- King's Discount Store has applied for a building permit in Grangeville. The permit specified a structure of approximately 22,000 square feet, with a plan to have 14,000 square feet of retail space and the remainder designated for storage. If everything goes as expected, construction could begin on the facility

in early June. The new store will employ between nine and 15 part- to full-time staff.

Nez Perce and Asotin Counties

- A recent United Airlines market analysis determined a need for an additional 35-passenger jet in Lewiston along with existing commuter service to connect with their regional hubs. But at this time the company doesn't have one in its fleet. According to company officials the good news is that they may begin ordering some by the end of the year. Currently only one commuter airline operates out of the Lewiston-Nez Perce County Regional Airport. The airline, Horizon, operates planes that can accommodate 37 passengers and connects with parent company Alaska Airlines, primarily in Seattle, Portland, or Spokane.
- Potlatch Corporation at Lewiston conducted its annual maintenance shutdown the second week of May. The shutdown, which allows preventive maintenance and preplanned maintenance work to be done, resulted in the closure for several days of the pulp and paperboard operation and parts of the sawmill. Consumer tissue operations remained open during the shutdown. Potlatch officials said several operations that normally continue through shutdowns operated on a limited basis this year, or shut down completely, because of the high cost of energy.

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